



MoU with TECO on “Taiwan Studies Project”



A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, The Universiti Malaya and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office (TECO) on 11 November 2020. It was signed by the Dean of FASS and Representative Anne Hung of TECO, and

witnessed by the new Vice-Chancellor of Universiti Malaya, YBhg. Dato' Professor Ir. Dr. Mohd Hamdi Abd Shukor.

Through the MoU, TECO will provide a grant of US\$96,000 (RM380,000) in support of the Taiwan Studies Project at the Faculty. Under the project, a Taiwan Lecture Series will be carried out at the Chinese Studies Department as well. The lecture series involves bringing in experts from Taiwan to lecture on a variety of Taiwan-related topics. The programme will also support two research projects at the Faculty; the first will focus on common Chinese languages and dialects in Taiwan and Malaysia, and the second will examine the role of Taiwan in the development of Chinese education in Malaysia.

It is hoped that with this generous support from TECO, the Faculty will be able to further enhance the quality of the teaching of Sinology and the strengthening of research capacity among faculty members.

HELLO 2021

And so, the year 2020 finally comes to a close. What first began as a year of great possibilities and opportunities of a much anticipated decade, very quickly became known to the world round as annus horribilis, or a year of great misfortune. Covid-19 brought to millions around the world illness and death, and exposed the flaws of inequality in our systems of government, exacerbating further what we previously knew of poverty, displacement and trauma. It is thus our responsibility, within academia, to always remember this, as we move forward into the new year with cautious anticipation.

While many of us will not miss the year 2020, we will certainly carry with us the lessons from it close to our heart and be mindful of what it means to live through a new normal. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences has put their best foot forward in ensuring the education of our students and scholarship amongst peers continued to thrive year long, in

spite of the circumstances. These trying times have indeed helped many within the FASS family carve out new and meaningful narratives of survival, camaraderie and truth; this issue exemplifies all of this in the good work we have done. The PULSE team is grateful to have had the opportunity to capture what we can of these transformative moments at the FASS, and will continue this in the coming year, which we hope will be filled with the best of opportunities, both scholarly and otherwise, for everyone.

“For last year's words belong to last year's language. And next year's words await another voice.” —T.S. Eliot

Farewell 2020.

Dr. Vilashini Somiah
Editor-in-Chief
Pulse@FASS

Disclaimer: This e-newsletter is an essential communication link between the FASS, UM and the wider community. It is imperative that the newsletter is accurate, informative and contain information that will mutually benefit both Faculty and community members.

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THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL
SCIENCES WOULD LIKE TO

Congratulate



Datuk Professor
Dr. Danny
Wong Tze Ken

on his re-appointment
as the Dean of the
Faculty

Professor Dr
Hamedí Bín
Mohd Adnan

from the Department of
Media and Communication
Studies on his promotion to
Professor



Of plagues and pandemics

BY DR. KOK SU MEI
ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

In Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the young couple's journey to a happy ending is brutally disrupted by a suspected outbreak of plague. Juliet has taken a potion to make her appear dead for forty-two hours: just long enough for her family to leave her in the tomb and for Romeo to arrive and take her away. But the messenger sent to tell Romeo of this plan is unexpectedly placed in quarantine, when he and his companion are suspected of having been in contact with an infected person. He reports:

***the searchers of the town
Suspecting that we were both in a house
where the infectious pestilence did reign
Seal'd up the doors and would not let us forth.***

Never receiving the message, Romeo hears from his servant that Juliet has died and kills himself at her grave. She wakes up, finds his dead body beside her, and takes her own life.

This is the only time in all of Shakespeare's approximately forty plays that the plague has a direct impact on characters' lives. Typically, scholars gloss over it as the odd exception to the general rule that Shakespeare never wrote about the multiple outbreaks of plague which occurred in England in his lifetime. However, encountering our own "infectious pestilence" in the form of Covid-19, this brief moment merits lingering over for the glimpse it gives us into the social effects of a disease.

Months after Shakespeare was born, the bubonic plague - named after the swollen lymph nodes or "buboes" endured by patients - killed about a fifth of the residents in his hometown of Stratford. Subsequent outbreaks in 1592, 1603, 1604, and 1608, would each kill a quarter of the population of London, the city in which Shakespeare carved out his career as a playwright. Accounts of these outbreaks sound oddly familiar. Authorities provided regular updates on the number of deaths and their locations, allowing wary



city-dwellers to steer clear of infected areas. Public gatherings were banned and recreational spots, such as theatres, were shut. The spread of the disease was noticeably worse in densely-populated areas, and authorities tried in vain to stem the tide of people leaving the city, fearing that these brought the disease with them to uninfected rural areas.

And, as the messenger in *Romeo and Juliet* reminds us, quarantine was the primary method for halting the chain of infection. Once a person was suspected of having contracted the disease, members of their household and other persons who had been in physical proximity to them, were confined to their residence. Guards were posted outside these buildings to ensure that no one entered or exited. Whereas newspapers in December 2020 gleefully reported that a William Shakespeare from Stratford is the second person in Britain to be vaccinated against the coronavirus, the William Shakespeare behind *Romeo and Juliet* never had the option of vaccination.

As an academic working in the arts and humanities, this has been a year of soul-searching. When the whole world is on pause till a vaccination is approved, what do my discoveries about sixteenth-century drama amount to? Why do I work into the night analysing recordings of theatrical performances when others at that very moment are channelling their energies into tending the ill? But at the heart of these questions is more fundamental one, which is far from new. It

“Crucially, Romeo and Juliet do not die of an infection. Rather, they are caught in the ripple effect of an outbreak...”

presents itself every time a good student is automatically channelled into the science stream, or a funding body portions a larger allocation to the sciences. The pandemic has merely brought the issue into sharper focus because the arts appear particularly frivolous and unimportant amid this struggle between death and life. Quite simply, I ask myself why the arts matter – or if they matter at all.

In my search for an answer, I return to the arts, reasoning that even accused criminals are allowed to testify in court. And Romeo and Juliet, that iconic work of Shakespeare, icon of the arts, presents a defence.

Up to that moment when the messenger returns in the final scene of the play, there is no indication whatsoever that plague is encroaching on the city. Young and old wander the streets, cracking jokes and falling into fights. A dinner party is held at Juliet's house. There is none of the restriction on movement and on gatherings that we would expect to find in a time of plague. Reading the play at the end of 2020, this makes the sudden intrusion of the plague all the more poignant. As we gingerly move toward a semblance of (new) normalcy while still being on high alert, the play seems to underscore that life goes on, even with the threat of death in the air. Families still feud. Lovers still love. Teenage hormones - Juliet is thirteen - rage on. What is crucial is to find ways to preserve that life and to minimize the damage as best as we can.

Crucially, Romeo and Juliet do not die of an infection. Rather, they are caught in the ripple effect of an

outbreak, including state attempts to contain the spread of the disease. In much the same way, it can be said that the death toll from Covid-19 is higher than that which is regularly reported by governments all over the world. This is not just because of undiagnosed cases, but also because of seemingly unrelated deaths which are nonetheless precipitated by the outbreak. From June to August of this year, WHO conducted a survey of 130 countries, which revealed grave discrepancies between the rising needs for mental health care and the depleting provisions made for them. In November, Japan and South Korea released data which revealed alarming spikes in the number of deaths from suicide, which outstripped the loss of lives from the coronavirus.

Locally, the Befrienders hotline in Sabah reported 1,375 calls received from March to October, compared to 1,473 for the entire span of 2019. Approximately 30% of these callers had suicidal tendencies. There is an undeniable incongruity in the battle to keep one person alive in a hospital while another contemplates death by suicide in the supposed safety of their own home.

Enter the arts. Ever since the first quarter of the year, when countries began to enforce quarantine and self-isolation, the global arts community has rallied to provide welcome diversions from morbid thoughts and the banality of blank walls. Award-winning movies and

“...data which revealed alarming spikes in the number of deaths from suicide, which outstripped the loss of lives from the coronavirus.”

musicals have been available for free online. Solo artistes and entire orchestras have livestreamed concerts. Art museums all over the world have also offered carefully-curated exhibits, and e-books are a-plenty. The attendant comments sections, message boards, and live chats on various online platforms testify to the positive impact of these offerings, in providing a much-needed sense of community along with the aesthetic experience.

There is a real sense in which the arts can play a significant role in the preserving health and lives at this moment. This is not to downplay the economic distress many families are in, or to deny the immense indebtedness the nation owes its frontliners. I am also not ignoring the complexities of mental well-being, and the impossibility of measuring it by a temporary feel-good moment. But it is imperative that governmental policies to deal with the effects of the pandemic look also to the health of the arts industry because more is at stake than the stricken paycheques of practitioners. In September this year, the Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture hosted a virtual arts festival, which allowed local actors, dancers, and musicians to showcase their work online. More of this nature needs to be done.

Unsurprisingly, Shakespeare enthusiasts have reached out for his plays. Many have turned to the comedies, exulting in the opportunity to escape for a moment into a world of laughter and romance. Yet, there can also be great solace in the tragedies, with their intense focus on the personal sufferings and eventual death of an individual, whose name is spotlighted by the title.

These affirm the value of a single life at a time when news reports flood us with photographs of mass graves and of body bags in refrigerated trucks, and reduce each Covid-related death to just another number. (The tragedies also supply standout lines which are immensely adaptable. Cooking more often than I ever have in order to feed a housebound family, I peel yet another potato and echo Macbeth: "Tomorrow and



Dr Kok Su Mei with her beloved family

tomorrow and tomorrow, stretches before us at this petty pace.")

Needless to say, not everyone will take pleasure in Shakespeare. I am all too aware that, for many of my students consigned to remote learning, Shakespeare is creating more pressure than pleasure. I am also troubled by the growing number of reports that university students are crumbling under the demands of the current circumstances. Thus, even as a teacher, I am challenged to return to the fundamentals of why art matters and to direct attention to the ways it can speak to our lives. If nothing else, a work like *Romeo and Juliet* -written by Shakespeare a year after the outbreak of 1592 - acknowledges the indelible mark that is left on the psyche by the experience of widespread. It also holds out the possibility that, like *Romeo and Juliet*, our current experience may one day be remembered less for the rude intrusion by a disease and more for the intensely human experiences of love and forgiveness while living in the shadow of death.

“...arts can play a significant role in the preserving health and lives at this moment.”

NAVIGATING ONLINE LEARNING THROUGH THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AS A SABAHAAN



BY ANNABELLE EVE HYACINTH
3RD YEAR B.A. IN MEDIA STUDIES

If there were one word I would use to describe 2020, it would be “confusing.” The virus and the pandemic’s eventual declaration were so abrupt and unexpected that it has led us into a life of shambles. What was supposed to be a fulfilling year for many, marking the end of a decade, has quickly become something out of a post-apocalyptic and sci-fi movie, and we were forced to adapt to the new normal – wearing masks, social distancing, sacrificing human contact, and cancelling plans. For students, this also meant that physical and face-to-face classes were replaced with online ones – with typical lectures held on Zoom, along with online assignments, and exams. While there are students who rejoice not having to wake up and attend physical classes, others struggle with having to adapt and rely fully on poor Internet connection. This is one of the struggles I am familiar with growing up in Kiulu, my beloved hometown, in rural Sabah; but having to face it during my undergraduate programme was utterly unexpected.

Having lived in both Sabah and Kuala Lumpur, there was instant recognition of how wide the digital divide is. In KL, I would have no worry over missing a deadline or the lagging video calls but here in Sabah, I would have to calculate every action I make just to be able to participate in my classes. I have had to pre-record my presentation in case the line cuts off on presentation day, climbed up the hill behind my house, or stand on a chair outside just to get better connection. When it rains or during the daytime, the connection can even completely disconnect.

While I admit that I might be more privileged than others, considering that I own smart devices to attend

my classes despite the poor internet connection, I recognize the struggles and pain of my other fellow Sabahans who cannot do the same. Moreover, it becomes particularly challenging when it is the exam season, and there is a time limit set by the. In fact, many of my Sabahan friends have chose to stay in their residential colleges nationwide during the MCO because they do not have any Internet connection in their hometown.

Who could’ve forgotten the story of Veveonah, the Sabah girl who went viral for having to spend a night in a tree for better Internet connection just to answer her exams? There were lots of mixed reactions to the story–some were inspired, and some were angry over the lack of development in her hometown and in Sabah, generally. While her perseverance should be commended, having to climb a tree at the expense of your safety and comfort, just to get an education should never be an option had proper facilities been developed in the area. However, the reality of Veveonah is a reality for most of us Sabahan students.

“...to have to climb on a tree and spare your safety and comfort, just to get an education should have been unnecessary...”

In May, Sabah Education Minister Dr. Mistrine Radin told Bernama that about 52% of students in the state do not have adequate means to participate in said online classes, including gadgets and Internet connection.

Some of my lecturers had told us to go to the city for better Internet coverage, but during the MCO and CMCO, this task was a bit more challenging since we weren’t allowed to do so out of fear of getting infected or being caught by authorities. Moreover, for students

who live in rural areas and do not have their own transportation have limited resources to move elsewhere as bus, the most common mode of public transit in Sabah had cease operation. We do not have the comfort of LRT or MRT and e-hailing transportation in the rural areas.

“...52% of students in the state do not have adequate means to participate in said online classes, including gadgets and Internet connection.”

This means that some of us might miss classes and even deadlines (my parents, who are both teachers, know this all too well), as poor Internet connection continues to be an obstacle in pursuing education online. Some of my mother's colleagues have also had to struggle through the heavy rain and poorly developed roads to hand out exam papers to those with no Internet connection and transportation. Overall, the lack of proper Internet connection and other basic facilities like good road quality, or electricity, are



The view from the hill behind my house where the connection is significantly better (Max 1.0MB/s). While the view is pleasing, the climb up and fear of wild animals and bugs are not.

common struggles of most Sabahans, a struggle that many in the city cannot see.

The joy of attending classes on campus was ruined by the pandemic. I am currently doing my internship and working from home in Kiulu, and the struggle with poor Internet connection persists. 2020, and the stories of all the Veveonahs' out there have proven to us the need for good and stable Internet connection to be made accessible for everyone, especially since our reliance on technology will only increase in the future. The necessary change needs to be made as it is only together that we can guarantee the future of the next generation.

The Department of International and Strategic Studies in collaboration with the Centre for the Promotion of Knowledge and Language Learning, Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) co-organised the second ICPIS in 2020 via virtual platform. The conference picked the theme of 'Malaysia in a De-Globalising World: Conflict and Uncertainty in the Age of Pandemic' to understand how the process of de-globalisation alters nation-states' position within the realm of domestic and international politics.

Distinguished Professor of International Relations and the UNESCO Chair In Transnational Challenges And Governance, School Of International Service, American University, Washington D.C, Amitav Acharya delivered his keynote address on Covid-19 and Its Impact on World Order. ICPIS received approximately 80 participants including the presenters. Ms Alex Westcott Campbell, Senior Editor Humanities and Social Science (Southeast and East Asia), Springer also shared a session on publication with the audience.

International Conference on Politics and International Studies (ICPIS)



Some of the participants during the closing ceremony ICPIS2020

A New Dewan Kuliah D



Former VC presenting the FGS Education Centre with a souvenir after the inauguration

Thanks to the Fo Guang Shan (FGS) Education Centre, Lecture Theatre D (DKD) received its very much needed facelift. DKD was built in 1961. In other words, DKD has been standing with its original looks for 59 long years.

The new Lecture Theatre D was officiated by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya Datuk Ir. Dr. Abdul Rahim Hj Hashim on September 2, 2020, and witnessed by the Venerable Jue Cheng, Chief Abbess of Fo Guang Shan

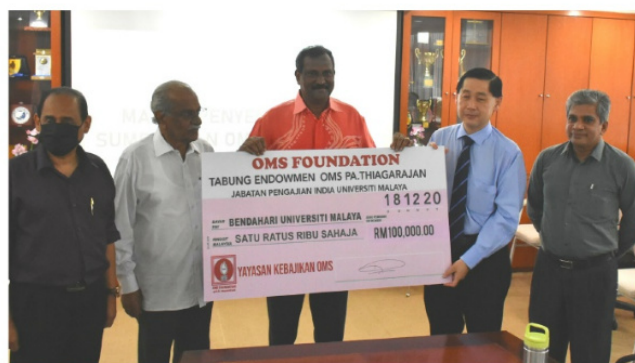


The ceremony attended by the Faculty members

for Malaysia, Singapore and Indonesia, the Dean and faculty members.

This new theatre hall is part of the collaboration between FGS Education Centre and UM, through the Chinese Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Through this collaboration, a 'Humanistic Buddhism Research Centre' will be established at the Faculty where it would be vital in fostering better understanding among Malaysia's multiracial and multi-religious community.

Cheque presentation by the OMS Foundation



On December 18, 2020, the Faculty was honoured by a generous donation of RM100,000 by the OMS Foundation, meant for the establishment of the P.A. Thiagarajan Endowment Fund at the Indian Studies Department. The founder of the OMS Foundation, OMS Thiagarajan himself, presented the cheque which was received by the Dean of FASS.

In his speech, the Dean thanked OMS Thiagarajan for his generosity, and hoped that the donation will encourage others to come forward in support of the Indian Studies Department and the Faculty. The endowment fund will provide support to the welfare of the students at the department, particularly those in need, as well as research and academic activities at the department.

Also present at the cheque presentation were Tan Sri K. Kumaran and Dato S. Kumaran, Chairman of the Indian Studies Alumni Association, Prof. Dr M. Krishnan, former Head of Department and current members of the department.

Visit by Deputy Vice-Chancellor



On December 18, 2020, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Development) and Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Affairs), Professor Ir. Dr. Abdul Aziz Abdul Raman with Deputy Corps Commander of the University of Malaya SUKSISS have made a formal visit to the Faculty to discuss cooperation on project with the Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) in research, documentation and media production.

Tan Sri Somasundram Endowment Fund Establishment

Tan Sri K. R. Somasundram, Chairman of the National Land and Finance Co-operative Society (NLFCS) presented the faculty a cheque for RM300,000 towards the Tan Sri Somasundram Endowment Fund on the 22nd of July, 2020. The cheque presentation ceremony was being held at the National Land and Finance Co-operative Society (NLFCS) headquarters. The fund, parked under the Department of Indian Studies, will provide support to the welfare of the students at the department, particularly those in need, as well as research and academic activities.



Also present at the ceremony were Tan Sri K. Kumaran and Dato S. Kumaran, Chairman of the Indian Studies Alumni Association, and members of the Indian Studies Department. The Faculty would like to express its gratitude to Tan Sri Somasundram for his generosity and support.

POSCO Asia Fellowship 2020 (To The Korean Studies Program, UM)

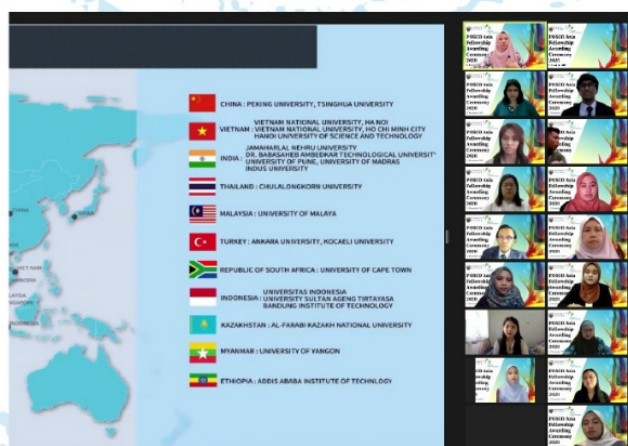


Ms Maisarah and Mr Majid of the East Asian Studies Korean Programme are among the awarded POSCO recipients

POSCO, a South Korean steel-making company based in Pohang, South Korea through its Foundation, continues to sponsor 15 students from the University of Malaya last year. Out of the 15 students, 8 were from the Korean Studies Program at the Department of East Asian Studies.

POSCO TJ Park Foundation operates 'POSCO Asia Fellowship' with the goal of mutual understanding through talent exchange between countries in Asia. POSCO Asia Fellowship is based on the ideology that better understanding between individuals increases understanding between countries, which contributes to world peace and mutual prosperity.

The Foundation has been sponsoring students at the Korean Studies Program since the year 2007. The



Online ceremonial award with recipients of the POSCO Asia Fellowship

fellowship recipients will participate in an exchange program in South Korea for the period of one or two semesters.

The most recent ceremony to award the fellowships worth USD1,000 each was held through an online platform on 15 December 2020. The experience during the ceremony was very interesting and all attendees managed to feel the celebration despite it being held online due to the pandemic.

The students were happy and honoured to receive an award from such a well-established company. POSCO's commitment and generosity in awarding fellowships to local students is proven to help them with their current studies and to be more successful in the future.

International Putra InnoCreative Poster Competition



The Research Panel of the University of Malaya Centre for the Study of Democracy and Elections (UMCEDEL) consisting of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Awang Azman Awang Pawi (UM); Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zulkarnain Abdul Rahman (UM); Dr Amer Saifude Ghazali (UM); and Dr Sufian Mansor (Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia) has won a Bronze Medal in the International Putra InnoCreative Poster Competition organized by Universiti Putra Malaysia from 27 to 30 October 2020.

A total of 66 teams participated in the poster competition for the category 'Inter disciplinary Approach in Teaching and Learning'. The title of the poster that won the Bronze Medal in the 4-day competition was 'Malaysian Politics Pre and Post 14th General Election'. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences congratulates the UMCEDEL Research Panel on this success.

Book Chapter Symposium on “Marginalisation and Human Rights in Southeast Asia”

BY DR KHOO YING HOOI

On 2 December 2020, the University of Malaya Research Group on Human Rights, Power and the Politics of Global Order (GPF035A-2020) in partnership with the Centre for Human Rights Multiculturalism and Migration (CHRM2), Universitas Jember co-organised an online Book Chapter Symposium on “Marginalisation and Human Rights in Southeast Asia”. This symposium witnessed 11 book chapters' contributors with four discussants including Dr Chong Wu Ling and Dr Mala a/p Rajo@Sathian from the Department of Southeast Asian Studies. Dr Khoo Ying Hooi from the Department of International and Strategic Studies and Dr Al Khanif, the Director of CHRM2 are the co-editors of this edited book that will be published by an international publisher.



Dr Iwan Taruna, Rector of the Universitas Jember delivered the welcoming speech.

Deepavali Celebration Online



60 lecturers, students and parents from the Indian Studies Department came together to celebrate the Deepavali

Celebration online. It was held on the 11th of November, 2020 in the month of Kartika according to the Hindu calendar. The celebration started off with members of the department, both academic and non-academic staff with their pre-recorded well wishes. Later, representatives from previous batches excitedly took turns to express their Deepavali greetings to everyone.

The celebration then continued with a surprise gift ceremony Deepavali Angpau giving to current students via online bank-in, of which the money was pooled by lecturers and donors. Even though this year's Deepavali celebration was conducted online in accordance with the SOP for Covid-19, spirits were still high and the department was able to capture great memories with all who came.

Regional Collaborative Program on Human Rights and Peace Education



Conception Meeting for the Collaborative Graduate Program on Human Rights and Peace Education

Initiated by the ASEAN University Network-Human Rights Education (AUN-HRE) Secretariat hosted by Mahidol University in Thailand, the first meeting on the AUN-HRE Regional Collaborative Graduate Program in Human Rights and/or Peace Education was remotely held on 6th November 2020.

15 participants, including AUN-HRE Secretariat team and representatives from various human rights related faculties in five ASEAN countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Vietnam, attended the meeting.

The meeting discussed plans for the establishment of an ASEAN Regional Collaborative Graduate Program in Human Rights and/or Peace Education. The concept was endorsed during the 13th Senior Officials Meeting on Education (SOMED) at Nay Pyi Taw in 2018 and its concrete proposal was further endorsed by the SOMED early 2020.

During the meeting, the AUN-HRE Secretariat team and the consultant presented a review of the existing graduate programs related to human rights and peace studies offered by interested universities. The meeting set up a task force to discuss, deliberate, and identify the objectives of such collaboration as well as a possible model to be formulated with Dr Khoo Ying Hooi from the Department of International and Strategic Studies as the Malaysian universities' representative.

Career talk with Dato S.Kumaran



The Indian Studies Department organised a career talk by a member of its alumni on the 2nd of December 2020. The event began with a short welcome speech from the department's new faculty member, Dr. Ravindran A/L Maraya. A total of 80 participants joined the event to meet Dato S. Kumaran, who was a member of the Diplomatic and Administrative Officer Corps.

Dato Kumaran will lead the Alumni Association of Indian Studies Department. Dato S.Kumaran spoke about career in the public sector as well as suggesting other career options for students of the department. He also provided advice in seeking new job opportunities as well as preparation to face job interviews. This talk was followed by a career workshop at the department the following week.

MAJAS Member Lecture Series



The Malaysian Association of Japanese Studies (MAJAS) organised a Member Lecture Series which was also co-sponsored by the Japan Foundation and the Japan Studies program at the Department of East Asian Studies. The talk featured Dr Geetha Govindasamy and Dr Muhammad Danial, both of whom had previously been awarded the Sumitomo Grant in 2019 to undertake research on Malaysia-Japan relations. While Dr Geetha spoke on the extent to which Japan's relations with Malaysia fared during the Pakatan Harapan government, Dr Danial contextualized bilateral relations within a foreign policy paradigm. Both speakers concluded that Japan was an important economic and investment partner. At the same time, Malaysia's foreign policy reflected pragmatism that took note of diversifying economic partners as a strategy in the midst of an unstable international order.

The New Directions in Malaysia Studies Workshop

Malaysian Studies has been responsible for bringing the academic world cutting edge work from scholars such as Jomo Kwame Sundaram, Syed Hussain Al Attas, and Khoo Kay Kim, who have successfully interrogated history, society and governance.

But as we depart from 2020 into a new decade, Malaysian studies must find ways to encourage the birth of newer and more dynamic forms of research that are able to impact international academia. Thus, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya organised a two-day brainstorming workshop entitled "Malaysian Studies Beyond 2020: Crossing Disciplines and Rethinking Critical Approaches" on 30 November and 2 December 2020.

On Tuesday 22nd December 2020, one of the earliest researchers in the emerging subfield of Constructive Journalism, Associate Professor Dr. Karen McIntyre, spoke at a special international guest speaker session of the Master of Media Studies (MMS) AQA7012 Global Journalism class.

Dr. McIntyre is an Associate Professor and Director of Graduate Studies at the Richard T. Robertson School of Media and Culture, Virginia Commonwealth University, USA, where she teaches and researches solutions-focused approaches to journalism and the news, including Constructive Journalism. This emerging form of journalism applies Positive Psychology techniques into the news making process to produce solutions-focused news stories. According to Dr. McIntyre, feel-good fluff pieces or positive news do not constitute Constructive Journalism. Instead, constructive reporting includes shining light on problems in society and focusing on solutions, dialogue and restorative narratives.

Based on her research in Rwanda, Dr. McIntyre found that constructive approaches to news reporting played a vital role in the country's post-genocide peacebuilding and societal healing. In response to a question from MMS alumnus and former Deputy News Editor at The Star Online, Edward Gomez, who also attended the talk, Dr. McIntyre conceded that there is no one definitive definition of Constructive Journalism but points out that a general agreement on basic notions of nuance and solutions is a starting point.

BY DR. HELENA VARKEY

The workshop brought together a group of 13 young Malaysian scholars from both public and private, national and international universities, and from sub-fields such as anthropology, history, cultural studies, international relations, and media studies.

Participants shared their recent research findings, conceptual frameworks, and methodological approaches to find common ground and develop collaborative projects moving forward.

Through this process, the workshop is hoped to have contributed towards the boosting of camaraderie and fellowship within this field, and the development of new collaborative interdisciplinary approaches to Malaysian Studies scholarship. Moving forward, several follow-up activities, including projects, and publications have been planned involving collaboration within and beyond this group.

Constructive Journalism Talks



Asma Xinyue Cai, an MMS student from China, took the opportunity to share with Dr. McIntyre and other students that the positive notions underpinning Constructive Journalism has inspired her to think about her own personal communicative practices, sharing that she has been more mindful of communicating in more constructive ways.

Dr. McIntyre's nearly 90-minute talk, conducted via Google Meet at 10pm Malaysia time (9am in Virginia), was attended by around 30 postgraduate students who joined the event from various locations in Malaysia and China, as well as Pakistan.

The talk was organized and moderated by the AQA7012 Global Journalism lecturer, Dr. Amira Firdaus. By integrating Constructive Journalism approaches into their news writing assignments, for three years in a row, Dr. Amira's Global Journalism students have consistently won 1st and 2nd places as well as placed as finalists in the Malaysian International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Young Humanitarian Writers Competition since 2018 until 2020.



UNDP - The KISAH Futures Competition

BY ASSOCIATE PROF. DR. MARY SUSAN PHILIP

Since February 2020, the news cycle and our lives have been dominated by Covid-19. Infection figures are constantly updated, new policies and processes have been put in place in practically all areas of life, politicians all over the world hold forth on the effect of the pandemic on society and the economy, and everyone has become an armchair expert on infection vectors and vaccines.

But have we given any thought to what ideas ordinary people have about the future? What are their fears and hopes? Do they envision a dystopia or a utopia? What do they think are the real areas of concern that need to be dealt with? In order to try to gauge a response to some of these ideas, a microfiction creative writing competition on the topic of post-Covid futures was recently held.

The KISAH Futures Competition was organised by the UNDP Accelerator Lab Malaysia, in partnership with MIGHT, Universiti Malaya's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, and Think City. The competition invited people over the age of 18 – either Malaysians living anywhere in the world, or foreigners living in Malaysia – to write stories of up to 700 words on the topic of what they think the future of the world will hold in the post-Covid era.

The competition attracted almost 700 entries, which focused on topics ranging from how class differences will affect people, to the technological innovations that will become necessities, to the emotional toll the pandemic will continue to take, to utopian futures of food security, to dystopian futures of planned cannibalism. Many of the stories showed imagination combined with what seem to be rather realistic projections into the future.

The competition was a laudable effort to help people to engage with and work through some of their central concerns about something which looks set to dominate our lives for the foreseeable future.

"North Indian Overseas Labour Migration in the Colonial Era"

BY DR. AKIKO SUGIYAMA



On December 11, 2020, the Department of History hosted its first webinar "North Indian Overseas Labour Migration in the Colonial Era: Origins, Intermediaries, and the Role of Trust" by Professor Crispin Bates, an esteemed historian of India and the Indian Ocean region. Professor Bates is a Research Professor in South Asian and Indian Ocean studies, Sunway University and a Professor of Modern and Contemporary South Asian History, University of Edinburgh. The event was live-streamed from the Resource Centre (Library) of the Department of History and was attended by over 40 guests from Malaysia and beyond.

Talk by Dr Vandana Saxena



On November 20th, the English Department hosted Dr Vandana Saxena (PhD, Uni of Delhi) for an online talk to members of the department as well as students and guests from other institutions. Dr Saxena spoke on the topic of "Afterlives of Colonialism: The Case of Colonial Romance". The talk focused on romances set in the colonial era (usually the early 20th century) such as Noel Barber's *Tanamera*, but brought the discussion up to date by examining the recent resurgence in popularity of such books, looking specifically at online reviews and responses on sites such as Goodreads.

The session was particularly significant for the Department as Dr Saxena will be joining us as a member of staff in 2021. Thanks to the pandemic, this was the first time that most Department members had actually met her. It was a pleasant encounter, and we look forward to working with Dr Saxena soon. Dr. Saxena has taught in India, Vietnam and Malaysia, and started her research in the field of Young Adult literature, especially fantasy and popular fiction before moving on to the field of Memory Studies.

First Virtual Dean's List Award

BY WAN HANI SYAMIMI
DIRECTOR OF THE DEAN'S LIST AWARDS



Considering the pandemic Covid19 and the enforcement of Conditional Movement Control Order, the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences presented the Dean's List Award 2019/2020 was held online in an effort to recognise the achievements of our students.

A total of 323 students from Semester I, 2019/2020 and 337 from Semester II have successfully made it to the Dean's List this year. The ceremony also hoped to bring positivity to the students and help keep them engaged and motivated during this challenging time.

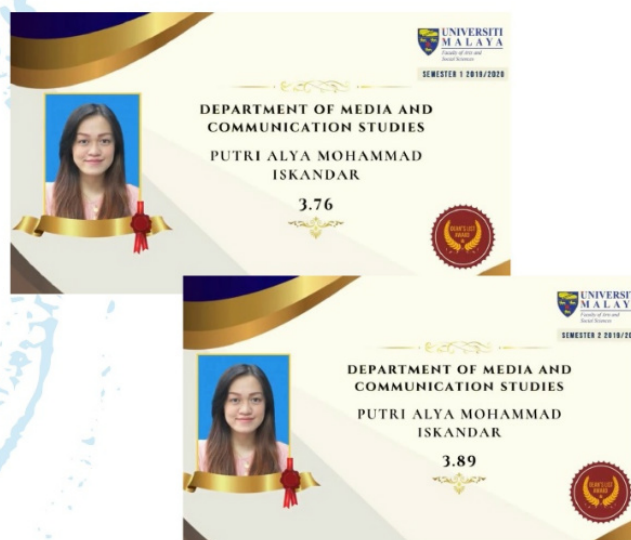
For the first time ever, the ceremony was conducted on YouTube, where we screened a special video presentation created to celebrate the great minds of the faculty, while keeping with the ceremony's momentum in embracing a new digital experience.

A total of 441 participants attended the virtual ceremony which also featured a live interactive chat with each other. The event was organised by the Global Network Club (GNC), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

The one-hour long video included special appearances from the Dean of the Faculty, Prof. Dr Danny Wong Tze Ken, along with other seven (7) Heads of Department from the. 'Defying the Odds' was selected as the theme of this years' ceremony, as an ode to everyone struggling during the pandemic. "We dedicate this ceremony to everyone. We have all defied the odds one way or another, and we all deserve the credit for this".



Live Dean's List Award with online chatting among recipients in the YouTube



Ms Putri Alya, a recipient for the two semesters in the session 2019/2020

The Faculty would like to thank Datuk KY Mustafa, the ex-state secretary of Sabah and former Chairman of the Board of Director of the Universiti Malaysia Sabah, for contributing a thoughtful piece to the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. We are honoured to feature it in the Alumni Voices Series.

An Ode to The Past, Present and Future: Some advice from an alumnus

In May 1971, I entered the Arts Faculty, University of Malaya, and spent the first year living on campus, in the Second College. Coming to university was my first ever trip to the National Capital, Kuala Lumpur from Sabah.

Living on campus offered many new experiences for my friends and I, as this was the first time that most of us have been to Kuala Lumpur or an institution of higher learning. Universiti Malaya is the country's oldest and most prestigious university, after all. In 1972 my friends and I chose to move out of the hostel, and were fortunate to stay at the Sabah House Hostel, at Jalan Ampang, about seven miles from the university. This route would be the platform of a real-life story that happened in July of that year, on my way home from campus.



Datuk KY Mustafa
Department of Anthropology and Sociology
1971-1974

I took the bus from campus and as usual it stopped at Foch Avenue, near the old Kelang Bus Station. I walked across Malacca Street to the Ampang bus stop near the AIA Building to take another bus to our house at Jalan Ampang. (The building is still there till today.) Two or three stops down, there were a few schools, and several school students got into the bus. One boy sat quietly next to me. When the bus conductor came over, the boy showed his season ticket. Almost immediately the

conductor started shouting angrily at the boy. The boy appeared so scared and just mumbled intelligibly. I politely asked the conductor what the problem was. He told me that the boy has used up his season ticket. I then asked how much it cost for him to reach the boy's station. The conductor replied five cents. I reached into my pocket and paid it off.

When I tried to talk with the boy, he could hardly speak, but continued to mumble strange sounds, with a lot of hand gestures. I did not realise then that the boy was deaf and mute. The boy alighted at the Ampang Park Complex, two stops before I got down at Sabah House. When I stepped down from the bus felt as if I was flying as I crossed the empty road. I never realised that the five cents I paid created such an exhilarating feeling in me. When I met my friends at Sabah House hostel, I told them about the incident, all of whom understood the circumstances.

I figured that was the end of the incident, but it was not. The next day I took the bus as usual to campus and returned late in the afternoon. When I reached our hostel, the guard and my friend Hassan Alban Haji Sandukong approached me with a small piece of exercise book paper. I remember a short note written in pencil with the words, "Abang, terima kasih atas pertolongan abang. (Brother, thank you for you the help.)" Hassan Alban went to explain that a young disabled boy came looking for me, just to thank me for helping him pay for his bus fare home the previous day. This boy was the son of a police officer who lived at the police station near Ampang Park. He returned specifically to express his gratitude.

While I felt great for the good deed done the previous day, the second event left me with plenty to think about; How did he figure out who I was or where I lived? Was it from the way I spoke and communicated?

Why did he feel it was necessary to look for me? I never met the boy again despite taking the same bus route almost daily for several months after. If I ever do meet him, I say that while I struggled to communicate with him, he found ways to tell me his feelings in the end. And ultimately, while I did not think twice about paying the bus conductor, it spoke volumes to him. I guess Five cents did go very far back then.

The moral of the story is this; it is not how much we give or do, but the sincerity of the act, and the very act of helping people. People, both the receiver and the giver, are shaped by the simplest of deeds. While this happened thirty years ago, this remains one of the more important memories I cherish as a university student in the big city, which in many ways shaped my outlook in life, both personal and professional.

My childhood dream as all my friends knew was to be a musician. However, as I do not have the basic qualification, I was not able to enter a Music School. This dream was half-fulfilled with the formation of a Malay Pop Band with me playing lead guitar and was the band leader. This later provided the grounding for leadership training in my government service career and life.

With my university education, it was destined that I become an administrator beginning at the lowest rung, and surprisingly reaching the peak of the profession in Sabah. I entered the Civil Service in Sabah, and endeavored to give it my all, pouring my heart into the work and did my best. I am proud to say that in my long career I was entrusted with the duties that included head of the Training and Career Division, Service Division at the Establishment Office, Director, State Public Services Department, and finally, the State Secretary of Sabah.

“to prepare the state public service leaders of the future. My call was ‘We want to create Good Leaders, Not Selfish Leaders’.”

In September 1997 Sabah launched Sabah.net (State Network) and the Electronic Government where I was involved directly as Director of the Science and Technology Unit. In 1999 we initiated the Reinventing Government Initiative, a philosophy that still guides the State Public Service till today. In 2003 as State Secretary, we launched the State Succession Planning Programme, to prepare the state public service leaders of the future. My call was “We want to create Good Leaders, Not Selfish Leaders”.

I love Training and Learning. Thus, my involvement with the two universities in Sabah are experiences I cherish. Since my appointment Head of the Training and Career/Scholarship Division in October 1978, I have been involved with Training in many capacities. As State Secretary, besides giving lectures and talks to the Succession Planning Groups, I also presented and wrote papers at national and international conferences and seminars.

After my retirement in July 2007, I was appointed to several positions. I am on the Board of Sawit Kinabalu Sdn Bhd (State Plantation GLC), Suria Capital Holding Bhd (a state public listed company), and BERJAYA Land Bhd (public listed company). In August 2017 I was appointed Chairman to the Board of Governors at the University College Sabah Foundation; and in November 2018, as Chairman of the Board of Directors of Universiti Malaysia Sabah (I resigned on 31 July 2019). The State Government appointed me as Chairman, State Public Service Commission effective 1 July 2020.



Datuk Mustafa (middle) singing with two university mates at the Freshies Talent Time Show in 1971, for orientation week. They did not win but had a great time.

My dedication to serving the nation has been impacted by my understanding of nationhood and public service, during my time at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

I have attributed much of my success in my everyday duties to the training I received from my degree in anthropology. In my 33 years of public service (including six years in the private sector in which I worked with a large manufacturing company), I have found that listening, even in allowing dissenting views, though uncomfortable at first, has helped sharpen my sense of initiatives, support, collaboration and commitment.

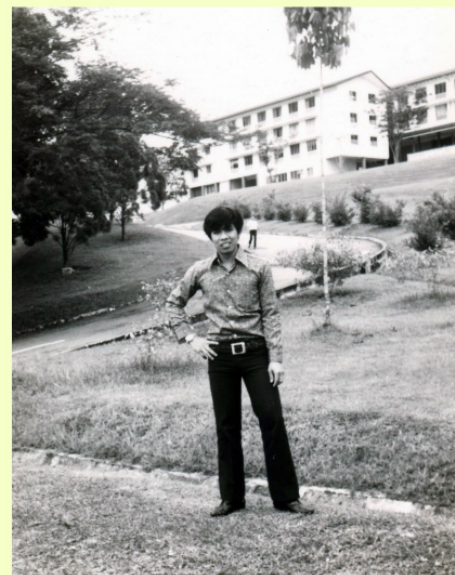
Invariably what happens next is most welcomed: without my needing to give any orders the younger officers will organise themselves and take up the newly identified ideas and actions as needed. The aspect of this approach is that everyone learns; especially me. Ownership and commitment are high, friendship and trust flourishes.

For this, I will never forget the heights of success that good education in my youth has brought me and have made it a life mission to promote and help develop educational processes and systems for young people in Sabah. It was only midway in my career did I begin to take a greater interest in my future. Several factors lead to this: among them the family, growing and schooling children, and for some, new challenges. I was blessed to have wiser and more experienced seniors help guide and advice the path I was on and helped me flourish.

In return, I do my utmost in assisting with developing and preparing younger friends for the leadership positions that they will one day inherit. I do not think it fair to leave behind a vacuum filled with confusion and unhealthy rivalry; rather it should be a legacy of challenging environments and goals. What I want is to be fair to the future generations and leaders, so that they will be in a strong position to plan their own future and the country's future.

In general, the voices of young people in this country must not be ignored or suppressed. When they do not find the proper avenue, typically they go underground, and we run the risk of losing very talented and skilled youths through this manner. From my own experience, feeling as if we have purpose and support can take a person far, and young people in this country need this, now more than ever.

“...the voices of young people in this country must not be ignored or suppressed... we run the risk of losing very talented and skilled youths through this manner.”



As a first year student in 1971, posing in front of second college, UM

PULSE invites alumni members of FASS to share with us their share of history and the amazing things they have done since graduating. Please send your articles directly to vilasomiah@um.edu.my (Dr. Vilashini Somiah, Ed-in-Chief) or nadhwah@um.edu.my (Ms. Nadhwah Tul Iman Mizam, Asst. Ed-in-Chief). We are also open to receiving donations and any feedback, suggestions and questions as well.

IN MEMORIAM

Salleh Ben Joned (1941-2020)



Final-year students and academic staff of the Department of English, UM, 1985
(Salleh Ben Joned, seated fifth from the left)



Salleh Ben Joned

**BY ASSOCIATE PROF. DR. MARY
SUSAN PHILIP**

2020 has been the cruelest year for the Malaysian literary world, taking two seminal writers from us - K S Maniam in February, and Salleh Ben Joned just a couple of months ago, on October 29th. Salleh was a maverick, an actor, a writer who made no compromises or apologies for the often difficult and uncomfortable ideas he shared in his poetry. But to many of us from the English Department, Salleh was first and foremost a teacher and colleague, and that is what I want to focus on here.

I joined the Department in 1985, a nervous first-year wondering what I had let myself in for. I was put in Salleh's tutorial group for one course, and was immediately taken by his energy, his passion, and his sheer present-ness. He was completely focused on us in class, and seemed to genuinely want to draw ideas and thoughts out of us. Such was his charisma that I felt, after that one class, that I had made the right choice in joining the Department. Sadly, just a couple of weeks later, he left the University permanently.

Salleh was known for his sense of humour – as a satirist, he could turn it against others, but he was able to laugh at himself as well. Fadzilah Amin, formerly of the English Department, recalls an occasion when the undergraduates of the department decided to send cards to all the lecturers. These cards had literary quotations on them. Salleh's, much to his amusement, read "O Rose, thou art sick".

Associate Professor Carol Leon of the English Department says that word of his reputation reached her before she had even joined the Department. Her friend who had studied under him years before "used to talk about this

intriguing lecturer who taught him eighteenth-century English Literature. His first encounter with Salleh was in Lecture Hall A. All the students were waiting for Encik Salleh Ben Joned.

Suddenly they heard the distinct clapping sound of sandals from the back of the hall. Turning around, they saw a slim man in blue jeans and black shirt, and in Japanese slippers, make his way down the stairs. He then proceeded to sit cross-legged on the longish table in front and began his lecture. The entrance was indeed dramatic and sealed my friend Gerry's impression that this was one singular person. As time went on, Gerry and Salleh became friends, "kakis", and the young undergraduate spent many happy hours at Salleh's house listening to rock music and discussing literature, music and life.

When I joined the Department five years later as an undergraduate, I was already filled with a mix of anticipation and a little trepidation at meeting Salleh - but what an interesting name he had! Our first meeting was in his office. As the group of us spilled into the small room, there he stood, dressed all in black (which I soon learnt was his signature style), to greet us. Then nimbly he jumped onto his desk and started his lecture on Alexander Pope's "The Rape of the Lock" without looking at any notes. Just the book of poetry before him. He would suddenly stop, stare at one of us and ask a question in a somewhat rough manner, and the student (all of us were so scared by then), would spurt out a response. Needless to say, I did not hear a word of that lecture that day. But gradually we all started to admire this unique lecturer who taught so well on eighteenth-century literature. Pope,

John Dryden, Samuel Johnson, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, writers so far removed from our time, Salleh made them vital, interesting and funny. He found ways which made the eighteenth century immediate to our reality. That was his brilliance. But I, and many others in class, remained a tad fearful of Salleh right to the end of the academic year.

Perhaps it was wise to be slightly fearful of Salleh because, as Professor Malachi Edwin Vethamani of the University of Nottingham notes, he had a sharp tongue and little patience for fools: "Salleh didn't suffer fools and was feared for his biting comments." But as a lecturer, he

also engendered a great deal of admiration: "He was a free spirit and unconventional and many of us loved him for it. Salleh was critical and thought-provoking, we looked forward to his classes! He also had a great sense of humour. There will always be the one and only Salleh Ben Joned. Certainly, inimitable". All in all, he says, Salleh was a remarkable man.

Perhaps Professor Sharmani Gabriel, a member of the English Department and also a student and friend of Salleh's, captures most clearly what made Salleh such a unique, iconoclastic and inspiring figure, both as a lecturer and a writer. Below is her moving tribute to him.

My teacher, Salleh

I knew Salleh Ben Joned in many ways — as a poet, an essayist, a newspaper columnist, and a public figure, but it is as my own teacher of English literature at Universiti Malaya that I am remembering him today. As I contemplate my obituary of sorts for Salleh, writing it almost forty years after I first turned up for his class in the early 1980s, I realise now that having as a teacher someone of Salleh's fierce light and uplifting energy has been my life's privilege. Although those of us in his class, like other literature undergraduates of that time, had not come to poetry for the first time, we listened, both spellbound and recharged, as poetry broke open worlds of possibilities.

Salleh was that rare thing, a teacher of literature who not only brought poetry alive but also taught us what poetry could do. Through Salleh, we were reminded that poetry had a social function to it, that its power could be harnessed to bring about a change in the social order and to give rapturous expression to our human daring to aspire and desire. And we learnt other lessons. The worst form of censorship, he told us very early on, is self-censorship.

I recall undergraduate life as being epiphanic when Salleh took to the rostrum. He rarely ever sat or kept still, preferring to move across the room, offering us through his spirited lectures a point of entry into other lives and contexts of experience. There was a restlessness about him, one minute he was prancing on the desk to stress a point, and as if to wake us from our complacencies, and the next he was jumping off it with equal flourish. He would enter the lecture hall in a striking ensemble of sarong and songkok and at other times he would be clad in his signature blue jeans and beret. He revelled as much in reciting poetry as in telling us that he trained under the distinguished Australian poet, James McAuley.

Of all literary forms, it was poetry that he loved best. He was in his element when he read poetry in class, delivering lines in his deep, distinctive voice, impossible to mistake for anyone else's. His ear was attuned to the rhythmic sonority and cadence of the spoken word, especially of Malaysian English, which he put to sharply satiric use in his own poems.

As a university teacher of literature, Salleh was driven by the need to make us understand the urgency of creativity. In our first year, he introduced us to William Blake and Gerard Manley Hopkins, two poets who, in their torments and ecstasies of experience, led divergent lives. One was derided as insane in his lifetime, the other was a Jesuit priest. Through Blake, he took up his burning battle cry against the "mind-forged manacles" of convention and through Hopkins, he implored us to open our eyes, and minds, to the ferocious beauty and energy of our God-created world.

As was the teaching, so was the life. Salleh's talismanic force derived from his attempts to synthesize opposites, both in his vision and interpretation of the world and in how he chose to live his life. His name "Salleh" translates as "pious" (Salih/Saleh) from the original Arabic. He was tantalized by its semantic and discursive opposite, "profane", and much of his critique was aimed at destabilizing the "pious/profane" dichotomy so as to shatter shibboleths and utter our world into new meaning.

"He would enter the lecture hall in a striking ensemble of sarong and songkok and at other times he would be clad in his signature blue jeans and beret, sometimes even smoking his pipe."

Born in Melaka, “like my hero Hang Jebat” as he liked to say, Salleh was very proud of his Malayness and “sambal-loving” ways. He was also well-versed in the Quran and the Hadith. His education abroad enriched his perspectives. Thus, he lamented the loss to the Malay language and the nation’s literature with the death of Pak Sako as intensely as he mourned the loss to Spanish literature with the murder of the poet Lorca. If he was in love with English poetry, he was equally besotted with the Malay pantun. He had an intense admiration for Octavio Paz, Henrik Ibsen, James Joyce, and Chairil Anwar — these were his other heroes, writers whose works, if not lives, refused to capitulate to the seductions of conformity.

The mock pieties and unthinking reverence of Malaysia’s literary, cultural and political elite provided fertile ground for Salleh’s acerbic wit. The solemnly smug, the puritanically patriotic, and the rigidly religious — these were Salleh’s enemies. He waged peerless war against them in his poetry and essays. If he was accused of being insensitive by his detractors, he was also forthright and honest. Pretentiousness and hollow rhetoric affected him so deeply that he was often moved to act brashly. Although his behaviour was sometimes brazen, Salleh’s motivations were to denounce hypocrisy and minds steeped in grinding conventionality.

And make no mistake. Despite his “notoriety” and celebrity, Salleh was no distant or standoffish lecturer. He often hitched rides on the campus bus with us or joined us when we were at the canteen, sharing in our conversations and pinching cigarettes off my coursemates, one of whom was Terence (now my husband). He would occasionally invite us to his home, part of a staff complex of tumbling, two-storeyed, colonial-era bungalows built just outside campus in Section 16, where he would show us the books he was reading and point to the meaning of the art hanging on the walls.

I lost touch with Salleh after he left UM and though I was a regular contributor to the NST’s literary page in the 1990s, to which he was a columnist, we did not have the opportunity to meet again. Over the ensuing decade, and as Terence and I established ourselves in our careers, we somehow or other got reconnected with Salleh. He would call us on the telephone at home on languorous Sunday afternoons to talk about what he was working on, but mainly to chat about this and that. One day, he dropped in at Terence’s office in UM with a copy of his (Terence’s) newly published book. He had picked it up at the bookstore, he told my husband, not only because Terence was a former student of his but also because he was proud of the kind of work that Terence was doing. He had come

by to ask if he could have his copy autographed.

Terence did not have to think long to write these words: “To Salleh, who inspired me to take the road less travelled”. Salleh was astonished by this message, and in fact telephoned Terence the next day to say he still could not believe it. I don’t think Salleh ever realised how much he had inspired his students. It was incomprehensible to him that he might have played a part in steering the course of our lives. Such self-doubt was perhaps understandable as Salleh, as we had come to know, was prone to depression, to those long days of darkness and despair. These were the Sundays when we would not hear from him.

In 2009, soon after returning from a few years abroad, I felt a need to get in touch with Salleh and organised for him to give a talk and reading to students of my Malaysian literature class. Salleh was keen to meet them, promising me that he was going to read “naughty stuff”! I titled the event “The shock and the syok: An evening with Salleh Ben Joned” as I was keen for my students to sample the shibboleth-smashing – “sallehcious” – pleasures that my coursemates and I had been fortunate to experience as part of our undergraduate education.

Although he was not, could not be, at 68, the robustly lucid and quirkily energetic Salleh who had been my teacher, his views and voice were recognisably his. When I called to thank him again the next day, Salleh was anxious to know if the evening had gone well. When I assured him that it had gone exceedingly well and that he had made a big hit with my students, I could sense that this did something for his equanimity.

I have a yellowing but prized-copy of the Old English epic poem, *Beowulf*, in my library. It is special because it was Salleh’s gift to me for what he said was an “unusually well-written” essay on nineteenth-century British poetry. The book’s opening page is inscribed in what is now his immortal hand, “To Sharmani, with faith in the world and all my best, Salleh, 14th February 1985.” His gift of faith was also a gift of love.

It is obvious that Salleh’s was no narrow path. Neither was it straight and easy. His precarious psychological health, personal tragedies, and the pressures of holding on to non-conformist views, and living by them, would no doubt have taken a heavy toll on him. Despite it all, Salleh had a profound faith in the world, in the capacity of the human imagination to rise above man-made fetters, dogmas, and chauvinisms.

I rage, and rage, against the dying of his light.

Welcome to FASS

**DR. RAVINDARAN A/L MARAYA
(INDIAN STUDIES DEPARTMENT)**



- PhD Indian Studies, Universiti Malaya
- M.A. Indian Studies, Universiti Malaya
- Dip. in Education (Tamil Language Studies), Institut Perguruan Tuanku Bainun
- B.A. Indian Studies, Universiti Malaya

Expertise and Teaching Focus:
Modern Tamil Literature

Experience:

- Taught at Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan (T) Ladang Kampar
- Senior Lecturer in Institut Aminuddin Baki, Ministry of Education
- Certified Coach in the Ministry of Education by Institute Aminuddin Baki
- Training and coaching section lecturer for National Professional qualification for educational leaders (NPQEL) programme

WE WISH A HAPPY RETIREMENT TO MDM. ZAIYAH JABAR

*Tanah sebidang ditutup semalu
Ke hujung desa menanam peria
Enam belas tahun pantas berlalu
Berkhidmat setia penuh ceria*

*Di tengah lautan belayar bahtera
membawa dagangan penuh muatan
Terima kasih dari Fakulti Sastera
Bakti disemai mewangi di ingatan.*

We would like to thank Madam Zaiyah Jabar for 35 long years of service to the University of Malaya, of which 16 years was devoted to service as the Secretary to the Deputy Dean of Research and Development in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. We sincerely wish you all the best in your future endeavors.



Thank you and all the best!

Contributing to Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

As we enter the 62nd year of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, we remember the faculty as a pioneer institution that has proudly hosted some of the world's most distinguished and influential scholars. Steeped in tradition and history, the faculty has been an institution for great intellectual growth and social capacity building.

As we make it our mission to improve and grow with the times, it is our sincerest hope that the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences will continue to impact and shape Malaysian and international societies in the best way possible. We constantly strive to achieve excellence for all our students and researchers; therefore, we seek generous contributions from alumni and friends to improve the learning experience of our students, including renewing some of our existing facilities.

We truly value the assistance of all our friends who have come forward to support us, both as individuals and organizations, with their generous donations.

We are very pleased to say that many of them are former students of FASS. We would like to thank them for reaching out and giving back to their alma mater.

Contributions made will go to various efforts planned the faculty for 2021/2022:

- Comprehensive student support for students in-need
- Tabung Kecemerlangan FSSS (Alumni & Industry)
- Construction of Dataran Sastera II for the use of faculty members and students
- FASS Research and Resource Centre
- The establishment of new programmes in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
- Upgrading of facilities

Contributions can be made through:

1. Cash/Cheque (Cheque is to be made out in the name of BENDAHARI UNIVERSITI MALAYA)
2. Bank Draft (Ref. No.)
3. Depository to Universiti Malaya Account (CIMB 8001279998)
4. Online payment:
(<https://epay.um.edu.my/payment/pay/752>)
For your convenience, scan the QR Code below:



Upon payment, please kindly submit the transaction receipt to sastera@um.edu.my for our further record.

Should you have any further enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact:

Madam Che Mazni Sidek: 03-79675525

mazni_sidek@um.edu.my

Mr. Mohd Yusof Razak: 03-79675527/5454

myrz@um.edu.my

*Season's
Greetings*

AND A

Happy New Year

MAY 2021
BRING
PEACE AND
PROSPERITY
TO ALL

